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TITLE: POLICY	PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE	RESOLUTION NO:
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 12, 1998	TYPE: POLICY PROCEDURE	SUPERSEDES: POLICY # PROCEDURE #

I. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide guidelines to county employees on the acceptable uses of e-mail and Internet services. It further identifies procedures for employees under the Board of County Commissioners to acquire and use e-mail and internet services.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Department Director: Refers to the head of a department or agency, or the director=s designee.**
- B. Home Page: The county=s information page(s) on the Internet/world wide web. The county=s home page will contain comprehensive information for the public on county services.**
- C. Malicious Code: Computer viruses or other programs introduced purposely to disrupt, destroy or damage county information technology.**
- D. Official Provider: An Internet service provider officially selected for use by county departments through a county request for proposal (RFP) or bid process.**
- E. Authorized User: Employee who has requested and been authorized internet and/or e-mail access from the department director.**

III. STANDARDS

- A. Official Provider: Official county internet service/e-mail providers will be selected based on standard purchasing policies. A department may use a different service provider in lieu of the county service provider, if approved by the Data Processing Board based on demonstrated need, but all users must sign an internet service request form.**
- B. Acceptable Use Standards: Acceptable uses for e-mail and the internet will include, but will not be limited to, the following:**

- B.1 Research/Education: Communication with professional associations, other governmental entities, universities, businesses and/or individuals which facilitate county business, research and education efforts, as authorized by a department director.**
- B.2 General Public: Distribution of information to the general public, whereby such information is requested and made available under county guidelines and policies for the release of information and the Freedom of Information Act.**

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- B.3 Incidental Communication: Incidental communication among county employees and professional colleagues which facilitates work assignments and professional discussion in a work-related field of knowledge.**
- C. Prohibited Uses of E-mail and the Internet: Prohibited uses for e-mail and the internet will include, but will not be limited to, the following:**
 - C.1 Personal Use: Personal use not related to the conduct of work on behalf of Lucas County or other organizations as set forth in agreements or contracts with the county. This includes, but is not limited to, solicitation, chain letters, jokes, gossip, gaming, personal communications and other activities related to personal recreation or personal business.**
 - C.2 Unauthorized Access: Efforts to gain unlawful or unauthorized access to information or computer and communications resources. Employees are prohibited from using unauthorized passwords, accessing files, retrieving stored communications, disclosing information or e-mail messages unless specifically authorized by the department director.**
 - C.3 Malicious Code: Intentional introduction of, or experimentation with, malicious code such as computer worms or viruses**
 - C.4 No County Affiliation: Illegal, fraudulent, or malicious activity; political activity; religious promotion; solicitation; or activity on behalf of organizations or individuals having no affiliation with county business.**
 - C.5 Copyright/Patent Violations: Transmission of materials in violation of applicable copyright laws or patents.**
 - C.6 Work Interference: Sending of messages likely to result in the loss of**

recipients= work or systems, and other types of use that could cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others.

- C.7 Obscene/Profane: Generating, receiving, viewing, storing, transmitting or other use of data or other matter which is abusive, profane or offensive to a reasonable person.**
- C.8 Harassment: The use of the internet or e-mail to harass employees, vendors, customers, and others is prohibited. This includes any insensitive, derogatory, offensive or insulting messages.**
- C.9 Aliases: The use of aliases while using the internet is prohibited. Anonymous messages are not to be sent. Also, the impersonation of others, and/or misrepresentation of an employee=s job title, job description or position in the county is prohibited.**
- C.10 Misinformation/Confidential Information: The release of untrue, distorted, or confidential information, as defined by Ohio=s Sunshine Laws, regarding county business is prohibited.**

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- D. Costs: The county will fund the official service provider. Departments requesting use of another service provider will be considered based on the following:**

- D.1 Budgeted: Funding must be available within a department=s adopted budget.**
- D.2 Departmental Regulation: A department director or designated representative will monitor all usage and costs.**
- D.3 Efficient/Effective Use: Users have selected another online service as the most efficient and cost-effective tool in comparison with all other communications tools.**
- D.4 Additional Costs: No additional Internet account costs (e.g. upgrading browsers) may be incurred by a department/user without consent of the department director and/or Data Processing.**

- F. Legal Issues**

- E.1 Copyrights: Most of the information available on the Internet is copyrighted. It is illegal to reproduce or distribute copyrighted information regardless of it=s source. It is the Department Director=s responsibility to ensure that copyrighted information is not misused by employees. Violation of copyright laws endanger the county and legal remedies include large fines.**

- E.2 Discrimination:** Harassing messages derogatory comments, or other forms of discrimination based upon color, sex, religion, creed or disabilities is against the law. It is the department=s responsibility to ensure that employees do not engage in discriminatory behavior while accessing the internet. Violation of discrimination laws may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and may include referral of a case to appropriate authorities for civil or criminal prosecution.
- E.3 Privacy:** Employees do not have a right to privacy while accessing the internet through the use of county property. The county reserves the express right to monitor, in any way, the activities of the employee while accessing the internet.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Access:** A department will register each of its user=s names with Data Processing before any outside service is accessed.
- B. Usage Request:** A user and the user=s department director must complete and sign an e-mail/internet services use request before a user name is assigned and access to the internet is allowed on a county-owned account.
- C. Remote Access:** An employee may access a county account from a remote location other than the site designated for that account (e.g. telecommuting or check e-mail while away from the office on business) with approval of the employee=s supervisor and only for county business.
- D. Anti-Virus Scans:** Files from all outside sources, including the Internet, must be scanned by the user or the user=s department with anti-virus software before first use.

- E. Compliance Review:** Violations of the internet policy and procedures will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the department director. Violations may

result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may include referral of a case to the appropriate authorities for civil or criminal prosecution.

- F. Downloading Files: Files are not to be downloaded from the internet without express consent by the employee=s supervisor. The possibility of downloading a file with a computer virus is great, and care must be taken not to contaminate the county=s network.**
- G. Uploading Files: Files are not to be uploaded to the internet without express consent by the employee=s department director.**
- H. A user, in forwarding a message which originates from someone else, may not make changes to that message without clearly disclosing the exact nature of the changes and identity of the person who made the changes. If a message has been designated by its originator as confidential or privileged, it may not be forwarded without the written consent of its originator.**
- I. All internet and e-mail activities are to be treated as public information because it is transmitted and/or printed by persons other than the intended recipient.**
- J. Web Page: To ensure a uniform county web presentation, development of a web or home page for personal or department purposes on the county account, must be authorized by the county administrator.**
- K. Users are responsible for the security of their electronic mail and internet account passwords and any electronic mail or documents that are sent via their account. To protect an account against unauthorized use, take the following precautions:**
 - K.1 Users should log off electronic mail and internet accounts before leaving their computer unattended. If an electronic mail account is left open and someone else uses it, it will appear as if you sent the message and you will be held accountable.**
 - K.2 Do not give out your password. You are responsible for messages sent via your account. Correspondingly, do not use or tamper with someone else=s account without their knowledge and consent. Unauthorized use of an electronic mail account is in violation of county policy.**
 - K.3 Change your password frequently. Passwords can be stolen, guessed or be inadvertently made available.**

APPROVED BY:

DATE: